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DISCUSSION PAPER

July, 1980

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TASK FORCE ON SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC

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BACKGROUND

1. In 1977 the original Task Force on Service to the Public surveyed public attitudes and public services in determining their attitudes to the federal government, its services and the service delivery system. The survey identified two Appendix "A" items:

- the public has major difficulties in gaining access to the federal government to obtain services and information;
- there is a general lack of awareness of federal programs and activities;
- there is uncertainty about the scope and role of the federal government in the economy and society;
- the public is dissatisfied with the quality of service.

TASK FORCE ON SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC

However, the quality of federal services continues to present a challenge to citizens and to the government at all levels of government.

2. As a result of these findings and other factors, the Task Force on Service to the Public was established in 1978 to study and report on the quality of service to the public.

CONCLUSIONS


3. Regional differences, whether in the provinces, territories or in the Government of Canada, are a major factor in the quality of service to the public. The Task Force on Service to the Public has identified a number of factors which are responsible for these differences and has recommended a number of measures to improve the quality of service to the public.

4. Evidence accumulated from the Task Force on Service to the Public and other sources indicates that the quality of service to the public is a major problem for the government at all levels.


- a) Access to services;
- b) Awareness of the federal government and its services;
- c) The quality of delivery of services and information.

These factors effectively define the mandate of the Task Force.





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OBJECT

The object of this paper is to outline the progress made by the Task Force on Service to the Public in implementing its work program. The paper also seeks approval in principle for new initiatives designed to improve the means by which Canadians can gain access to the federal government and to a specific new action program designed to improve the actual delivery of service by departments and agencies. Guidance is also sought with respect to new approaches to Quebec.

BACKGROUND

1. In 1977 the original Task Force on Service to the Public surveyed private citizens and public servants to determine their attitude to the federal government, its services and the service delivery systems. The survey indicated (see Appendix "A") that:
 - the public has major difficulties in gaining access to the federal government to obtain services and information;
 - there is a serious lack of awareness of federal programs and services;
 - there is uncertainty about the actual role of the federal government in the community; and,
 - the public views the federal government and the public service as indifferent, hostile and insensitive.

Moreover, the quality of federal service delivery is perceived to be inferior to service provided by either the private sector or other levels of government.

2. As a result of these findings and the general dissatisfaction regarding the image of the federal government and the public service and to ensure corrective action was taken, the current Task Force was established, in late 1978.

CONSIDERATIONS

3. Regional alienation, whether it is in Western Canada or in the Maritimes, stems to a large extent from a genuine feeling that the Government of Canada only really exists in Ottawa. This perception of remoteness is continually encountered by the Task Force on Service to the Public as it works to make government more accessible to all Canadians. Counteracting this view and demonstrating that the federal government is nearby and readily available to all Canadians from coast to coast is the axis on which all of the Task Force initiatives are based.
4. Evidence accumulated from two major surveys in 1968 and 1977, as well as from the Task Force experience, indicate, that the problems can be reduced to three categories:
 - a) Access to government;
 - b) Awareness of the federal government role; and
 - c) The supply or delivery of service and information.

These issues effectively constitute the mandate of the Task Force.

5. The Task Force had a mandate and sufficient resources to directly address problems involving Access and Awareness and it therefore gave these two areas immediate priority. Considerable progress has been made over the past year. However, the task of altering the actual delivery of service is primarily departmental and the Task Force itself has only responsibility to inform, encourage and facilitate improvements. This has not proven effective and a new approach is being proposed in this paper.

MAKING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MORE ACCESSIBLE

6. Over the past eighteen months the Task Force, with a staff of five, has directly attacked the problems of the access of Canadians to federal services and information. This has been launched on four different fronts:
 - i) Access by telephone;
 - ii) Access through in-person visits;
 - iii) Access through Members of Parliament; and
 - iv) Development of a comprehensive guide (Index) to federal government programs and services.

Access by Telephone

7. Canadians are recognized as among the heaviest users of the telephone in the world. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of Canadian homes have telephones. Further, the Task Force surveys and analysis indicate the telephone is the primary method Canadians use to obtain information. Therefore, the first major focus of the Task Force was to improve access to the federal government via the telephone. In addressing this objective, the problems facing Canadians in using the telephone to access the federal government readily became evident. The problems are diverse and complex. In telephone directories the federal government is listed by organizational title rather than programs and services and frequently only in major centres. People in smaller communities usually only have the Post Office or an Employment Centre. Sometimes departments and agencies are listed under "G" for Government, often not. In some directories, especially in the West, the federal government simply does not exist. There are no standards and little conformity. People have no place to turn to obtain information as there is not a central information number. When individuals do find out where they are to call it often means they must call long distance. Often those most in need of assistance are least able to afford long distance telephone calls.

In response, the Task Force has initiated a comprehensive program to improve telephone access to the federal government. This program and progress to date is summarized below.

- a) Telephone directories can be an effective means of advertising programs and services offered by the federal government if they are properly listed. By sharply limiting organizational listings and adding the services offered by government, the listings become understandable. This modification of listings is now well advanced across Canada.

- b) The Task Force had the mandate to, and has initiated, with the assistance of the telephone companies, a new readily identifiable profile for the government in virtually all telephone directories across Canada. Each telephone directory will now contain a distinct government section, clearly and easily identifiable on blue pages and located directly between the white and yellow pages of the directory. These will contain all federal government listings and in addition to the normal departmental listings, programs and services are listed alphabetically under the names by which they are commonly known. By the end of 1981 all Canadian directories will include the blue pages and it appears that the provincial governments intend to take advantage of this initiative and include their listings in the blue pages as well.
- c) Owing to the fact that government offices tend to agglomerate in major urban centres, few services are available, through directories, to those in smaller towns and rural communities. This is also, to some extent, true in large centres that are not government concentration points. For these people the federal government rarely exists in terms of their personal lives. This would change dramatically if information on the approximately 20 to 25 high volume services offered by the federal government were to be made available to them toll-free. Those services could be listed in the "blue pages" of every directory in Canada with access to the nearest office and thereby immediately provide a federal presence in every community in Canada. The system has been explored with telephone companies across Canada and, if approval is given, they are all prepared to assist the Task Force and the affected departments to develop the most cost-effective method of achieving the objective. Provincially, services such as this, or others like it, are offered now by seven provinces including Ontario, Quebec and the three Prairie Provinces.
- d) One of the by-products of blue pages is that they provide the opportunity for governments to advertise services or provide basic information. Many of the questions asked by citizens attempting to obtain a passport, a social insurance number, old age benefits, publications, or even unemployment insurance are "how do I do it" or "what do I do". Blue pages could describe simple steps to obtain a service which would reach a large audience and reduce the number of calls to departments. These pages can provide a good service and subtle reminder to Canadians of the services provided by the federal government.

Costs have not entirely been worked out with the telephone companies but they should be less than advertising in the yellow pages.

- e) The Task Force has initiated a federal/provincial central referral network to provide the final link in a total telephone system to assist those who cannot find the service they require. Cabinet endorsed a recommendation in 1978 to the effect that a system be developed to refer confused callers to the appropriate officer in the appropriate agency. The problem, of course, is that the public rarely

knows which government to call much less which agency. Moreover, systems such as this are expensive. Two years ago, therefore, a pilot project was begun in Manitoba whereby the provincially operated Citizens Enquiry Service began to service both federal and provincial governments. The federal government trained the staff, monitored the quality and paid half the cost. The pilot was exceptionally successful and the extension to the rest of Canada was authorized in late 1979.

Tentative agreement has been reached at the official level with five of the remaining nine provinces and with both Territories. Of the other four provinces, only B.C. and Newfoundland seem to be posing any difficulties.

Funds were approved for the current fiscal year and it is expected that up to seven contracts can be signed by October.

It should be noted that when the referral service becomes federal/provincial, the contract is extremely clear that:

- the nomenclature represents both governments;
- staff training is conducted by the federal government;
- quality control is closely monitored by the federal government; and
- advertising of the system is by mutual agreement only.

ACCESS THROUGH IN-PERSON VISITS

8. The 1977 study into citizens' perceptions of government, which indicated there was widespread dissatisfaction with the quality of service, produced statistics that suggested many respondents preferred to deal with government on a face-to-face basis. The majority of those were younger Canadians or those who lived in smaller cities and non-rural areas.

In smaller centres, the federal presence is virtually non-existent. In small cities, it exists but is fragmented in such a way that a citizen can easily become extremely frustrated in finding the "right" place to deal with his problem. Studies also show that Canadians are ill-informed about jurisdictional responsibilities, either by department or by level of government, which compounds the aggravation.

Even in major centres, where there are federal buildings and activities, the problem of serving the needs of the public still exists. Major government buildings have failed in projecting a positive image of service or of communication. Experiments have been undertaken such as in Toronto's North York. It was unsuccessful and failed to answer fundamental questions of how facilities of this type should be managed, how should they be funded and, more important, what needs of the public should be addressed.

Information Canada attempted to address the over-all problem but suffered from having an omnibus type of objective -- a method to disseminate information, a book store, an enquiry facility and a federal focal point in major cities. Its creation, its mandate and its operation provoked criticism from all levels of the public, as well as suspicion and cynicism from government departmental information personnel and politicians.

Recognizing the need as well as the diverse problems, the Task Force initiated a substantial study (see Appendix B) which demonstrated that there were a number of different opportunities available to provide a satisfactory over-the-counter enquiry service. In view of the range of options, the Task Force proposes that a pilot study be undertaken, using a variety of approaches, to determine the level of service, the cost effectiveness and market penetration levels required to meet the needs of Canadians.

Because of the unfortunate Canadian experience with programs designed to meet this need in the past, this proposal provides the most viable opportunity to attack the problem and to develop an approach for solving it.

It must be emphasized that this proposal, with its options, was carefully developed to avoid the pitfalls and criticisms of Information Canada. These options are uniquely developed to respond specifically to demands for information made by citizens. This avoids the multi-purpose objectives of information dissemination, resource centre and response systems that caused so many difficulties with Information Canada.

9. In developing this proposal, a wide range of enquiry services were examined to determine the level of service provided, the kind of facilities required and the demands placed on them by users. This examination defined three basic levels of service:
 - remote information providing facilities such as publication displays in supermarkets or more sophisticated facilities that could include more detailed reference documentation;
 - referral facilities where enquiries would receive some discussion to clarify the question and then would be referred to an appropriate person, document or location;
 - information counselling where the enquirer would be given information, advice and assistance in dealing with the specific problem.
10. Four options evolved.
 - a) Walk-In Centres which would provide in-person contact with staff ranging from one with volunteer support to three or four paid employees. Equipment and resource facilities could include: telephone, reference books, government books, directories, card indexes, computer systems such as Telidon, and shelves of publications.
 - b) Information Carrells -- a partly enclosed shelf, counter or desk -- with reference material and equipment available. These could be located in shopping centres, building lobbies,

Post Offices, Employment Centres and public libraries. A variation could include use of publication displays in supermarket chains, taking advantage of high traffic volume.

- c) Mobile enquiry systems which could be one of the following three:
- i) A travelling van equipped as a walk-in reference facility with qualified staff which would travel a particular route visiting smaller communities on a regular basis;
 - ii) An information officer travelling among small communities using a car and carrying necessary reference material, using local telephones for back-up and perhaps carrying a portable computer terminal; and
 - iii) Exhibits and displays which would be operated out of a larger enquiry centre in the region as an extension service.
- d) There are a number of government agencies that now have clearly identified store front locations. Information specialists working in these offices could be trained to respond to enquiries about all government departments, not just those of their own. In a designated number of strategic locations in various government departments, particularly in regional offices, there would be specially-trained individuals who would, in effect, be individual "enquiry centres".

None of these would detract or undermine the vital role of Members of Parliament. They would, rather, provide a valuable support capability in assisting Members' staff meet the needs of the constituents.

11. It is proposed that a pilot project be developed, incorporating all three levels of service, which would be carefully managed and monitored for a period of one year to serve as a guide for Canadians.

The pilot project would include 90 carrell-type of enquiry facilities in small communities and in shopping centre environments across Canada; utilization of existing departmental store front offices in nine medium to large sized cities; staffed walk-in centres in medium sized cities, and one fully integrated facility in a major western Canadian city.

Even though this would constitute a pilot project, there would be a growing awareness of the federal presence which emphasizes the need for the use of a corporate identity in association with the program.

ACCESS THROUGH MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

12. Traditionally Members of Parliament have been a source of assistance to individuals trying to approach the federal government. This role has been enhanced and the Members have become even more involved, as a result of the development of the constituency office.

13. In November 1979, Cabinet asked the Task Force to examine ways and means to improve the access citizens have to their Member of Parliament and to determine what assistance Members would like to have in performing this function.
14. The Task Force has surveyed some constituency offices and, more recently, met with the House Standing Committee on Management and Members Services. The Task Force also initiated, beginning in late 1979, the practice of having Members' constituency offices listed in all telephone directories under the blue pages.
15. The results of the meetings indicate that constituency offices would benefit from a more structured approach to the flow of information to them. They would also benefit from toll-free telephone access, especially in the rural areas, and a directory of federal government offices services and programs tailored to the local area.
16. The Standing Committee made it clear Members were responsible for their own services but they would appreciate the assistance of the Task Force. Members also made it very clear they believed they had a principal role in providing assistance to those wishing to gain access to government.
17. The Task Force gained a significant understanding of Members wishes during the meeting with the Standing Committee and agreed to prepare a report including some proposals designed to assist constituency offices. The Task Force was invited to visit several more constituency offices prior to preparing the report, which was scheduled for October.

INDEX OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

18. Information services, of course, are only as good as the data available. It was soon discovered there was no central reference point or documentation on federal programs, services, and offices. To fill this important gap, an information data base on the federal government, its programs and its services was created and the first comprehensive Index of Federal Government Programs and Services was published. This Index is a major catalogue of federal programs and services with pertinent information on each. It includes a detailed cross referencing system. Improvements are now being made in the second revised edition and demand for it is strong. The Task Force is also computerizing the Index data so that it can be available for access by remote computer terminals as well as in regularly revised hard copy editions. The Index, like the telephone referral system and the "blue pages", has filled a major gap in bringing together information on, and access to, the federal government and its services. Despite some initial resistance from line departments, the Task Force is now receiving generally good cooperation on the Index to the point where the "known" programs are now steadily increasing from unsolicited sources and indeed most departments and agencies are now viewing the Index as an increasingly useful asset.

AWARENESS

19. All the initiatives and proposals outlined in the access activities of the Task Force serve the two-pronged need of bringing government closer to the people and making it more responsive to individual needs. The plan is not complete, however, without providing for the creation of an awareness among Canadians that the federal government is undertaking these activities.

To meet this need, conscious effort is necessary to develop a "corporate identity" for the federal initiatives resulting from the Service to the Public mandate. This identity must be bilingual and highly flexible in application, so it is essential that it contain a strong symbolic element that is both memorable and inherently communicative. The ideal symbol will both express the government's desire to serve and challenge public servants to deliver what the government promises. Foremost in the development of a corporate identity is a name and a system of identification for the federal initiatives ranging from government telephone listings to enquiry centres. In recognition of the urgency of this need, the Task Force has initiated action to develop a system to meet these requirements. As the ingredients of this system become known, they will speak silently but forcefully that the federal government is nearby, is responsive and is making a visible contribution to individual Canadian's lives. Through use, new government actions on behalf of the citizen would be instantly and effectively identified. The use of senior managerial staff in resource centres would translate the faceless bureaucracy into "people in your own neighborhood" who understand local issues because they live among them.

20. In addition, it is essential that federal government managers in localities outside Canada, especially provincial capitals and major centres form management resource teams. These teams would fill a major gap in both the access and delivery systems being proposed in this paper. They would provide a vital link between Ottawa and the regions and provide a focus for local government activity to bring some unity to federal government actions.

The task of these teams would be to:

- Test guidelines and policies involving public servants and their relationship with the general public to ensure that the proposals are viable and practical in a regional setting;
- Provide advice to government on issues requiring changes in broad administration policies as they affect the public and on methods of dealing with matters of regional concern;
- Maintain a close monitoring of the access initiatives;
- Provide advice and leadership required to influence attitude development and change;
- Exchange information on new and successful service initiatives;

- Provide federal presence in community activities as now is done by representatives of most major private firms; and
- Provide a public affairs orientation, with regional sensitivity, to federal initiatives.

IMPROVING THE DELIVERY TO THE PUBLIC OF FEDERAL SERVICES

21. The magnitude and complexity of the task of stimulating and effecting significant change in the delivery of federal services is imposing. The survey conducted by the Task Force in 1977 indicated that the general public sees the federal public service as:

- indifferent,
- hostile, and
- insensitive.

Further, the current and planned efforts to improve access to government may actually result in further entrenchment of these adverse public perceptions if the improved access is not accompanied by a more responsive and sensitive delivery system. The Task Force does not believe significant lasting changes can be wrought by short term projects, and an advertising or PR approach to the problem could quite easily backfire and worsen the government's image.

22. In the delivery of government services, the Task Force believes there is an urgent need for a major philosophical reorientation that would place emphasis on client service and satisfaction rather than on meeting suppliers' desires. In other words, adopting a private enterprise approach to serving the customer.
23. There is evidence that the public perception of the federal government and its programs and services is significantly affected by the degree of satisfaction the individual feels after a transaction with a department or agency. This factor is not influenced by the nature of the transaction. Service offered by National Revenue - Taxation, was considered to be superior according to the surveys, for example. In spite of this fact, however, there has never been a concentrated or directed effort to build a comprehensive approach to the delivery aspect of government programs or services. Many departments and agencies have undertaken initiatives designed to improve their service delivery but few have been based on clear policy with guidelines and standards or even basic marketing principles long practiced by the private sector.
24. The resolution of problems related to the quality of service delivery is by its very nature long-term and complex. The Task Force has taken some time to assess the approach to the issue that will have the most impact over the shortest period of time. The major considerations are that:
- a) each department and agency has unique service and information delivery requirements; but
 - b) there are basic concepts and principles that are central to the marketing and retailing of services whether they are informational, regulatory or product oriented.

25. Elementary questions concerning the public itself must be answered. For some government services, the relevant segment or sector of the public being served is self-evident. But for many others, the dimensions of public interest or demand are not at all obvious. In effect, the "markets" for many government services seem to be poorly defined. Our first step in seeking to improve delivery is therefore to develop guidelines and procedures for effectively measuring service markets in order to determine the dimensions of demand, demographic distributions, trends, motivations, frequencies and the physical processes by which services are obtained. Only when these basic market descriptions have been developed can sensible assessments of service delivery be made.

A second and directly related step is that of setting standards of service. Here too, there are obvious and not-so-obvious cases. Some government departments, such as Health and Welfare, render what can genuinely be described as services in the sense that they deliver positive benefits, often at little or no cost to the recipient. In these cases, it is reasonable to measure adequacy of service in terms of customer satisfaction. But other services involve only broad and impersonal benefits or information and still others, such as Customs, are entirely regulatory and clearly cannot be measured entirely on the basis of customer satisfaction. With these distinctions in mind, guidelines and procedures could be developed so that each department and/or service unit can formulate its own particular standards of measurement for its services.

26. The recommended approach is at once a bold and a controlled initiative. To a significant degree, the scope of the project involves breaking new ground and, consequently, when this is considered along with the sheer size and diversity of the federal government, the approach must be a gradual process. Momentum can pick up as experience is gained and success demonstrated.

The proposed approach focuses on four distinct and key aspects of the service delivery system. These are:

- i) the development of a framework that will provide departments with a capacity to take a market-oriented approach to their service delivery. The focus will be on adapting the elements of the normal private sector approach to public sector needs and an assessment of their usefulness under a variety of circumstances.
- ii) the assessment of departmental performance in, and commitment to, delivery services to the public. The focus will be on developing and implementing guidelines on service delivery which will be used by departments to assess the extent to which they are meeting established goals of service delivery. Where departments do not have adequate goals, and standards, the guidelines would assist them in establishing these performance criteria.
- iii) the development of strategies and processes to improve service delivery. The focus will be on developing and implementing guidelines to assist departments in diagnosing their service delivery problems and to

develop specific approaches (strategies, processes and corrective actions) to rectify shortcomings and to improve service delivery.

- iv) those individual public servants at the point of contact with the public. The focus will be on behaviour and attitudes to obtain a more responsive and sensitive personal contact with the federal government.

A keynote of the entire approach is that the Task Force will emphasize the positive and constructive benefits to be obtained from a better relationship between individuals, the various communities of interests, and departmental programs.

- 27. The Task Force recommends the government move into the full scale implementation of this program in three phases.

Phase I. This would be an intensive six month effort to develop, and conduct preliminary testing of, the specific guidelines and programs for improving service delivery. A report to the Cabinet would be made at the end of this phase which would then form the basis, depending on the decisions of Cabinet, for distribution throughout the government as a position paper on "Service to the Public". The conclusion of Phase I would mark the commencement of a major program to sensitize federal departments to the importance the government places on improving service delivery and, through this, relations with the public.

Phase II. The guidelines and programs (eg. training programs) developed in Phase I should be subjected to six months of in-depth testing in three or four departments or major programs. At the conclusion of this Phase, the guidelines and programs would be evaluated and revised and made available for use throughout the federal government.

Phase III. Following the completion of Phase II, the entire program would be extended to all federal departments and agencies. The implementation of the guidelines and programs would be the responsibility of each department and the role of the Task Force would be to monitor progress, maintain an information system and provide assistance as requested.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 28. Access by telephone.

- a) Improving the directory listings and introducing blue pages create a substantial cost to the telephone companies across Canada. There are charges for new paper stocks; changing the listings, the location of the pages and the interlisting of communities in one section. Most telephone companies charge for changes in directory listings and the costs of taking this initiative would be high. For example, Bell Canada could charge \$17 for each change from a departmental to a service listing in each directory in Ontario and Quebec. The total costs to telephone companies across Canada could be as high as approximately \$1.0 million.

A continuing annual cost of approximately \$500,000 could also be anticipated. An agreement has been reached with Bell Canada to waive these charges. Bell, it is believed, has done so on the understanding that the federal government intends to proceed with the full package including the Equal Access feature.

- b) The major new cost implied by this paper involves the proposed service that will enable all Canadians to gain toll-free access to approximately 20 major services offered by the federal government. Based on data compiled as a result of experience in Ontario from information received from Bell Canada, (see Appendix "C") it is anticipated that this service will cost approximately \$2.0 million when it is fully implemented in 1982-83. It must be implemented gradually as it will depend entirely on cyclical telephone directory publication dates.

This is not necessarily a net addition as some services such as Income Tax and the Business Information Centres now exist. There would also be some significant indirect savings from a reduction in correspondence. As each department would pay their own costs, the average per service would be approximately \$100,000, annually assuming equal demand. There has been no attempt made to value the benefits obtained from increasing services to the public in this manner.

- c) Costs for directory advertising are not known at this time. Moreover, it would be expected that they would be borne by departmental public affairs budgets. The main point in this paper is to establish the potential of the feature and to obtain approval for the Task Force to pursue it with telephone companies and the relevant departments and agencies.
- d) The federal/provincial telephone referral service was costed out in 1979 at approximately \$750,000 for 1980-81 and \$900,000 for 1981-82. Experience in negotiations indicates that this estimate was accurate, according to present knowledge of demand.

29. Access through "In-person" visits.

The studies conducted on the development of a system of enquiry centres produced a range of alternatives for pilot projects. The principle involved is, of course, that demand, market penetration management issues, productivity and cost effectiveness cannot be determined with any precision at this point. The recommended tests or pilot projects would cost approximately \$1.4 million over 1980-81 and 1981-82. Of this, approximately \$900,000 would be additional funds. The costing would be as follows:

	\$ (000)
- Two walk-in centres (cities of 500,000 - 1 million)	244
- One small walk-in centre (cities of 100,000 - 500,000)	93
- Three at shopping centres (varying sized communities)	135
- Ninety carrells (varying sized communities)	55
- Eight itinerant services (rural)	153
- Nine departmental enquiry centres (existing facilities in pilot regions)	189
- Design, evaluation and administration	500
	<hr/> 1.369

30. The Task Force with an allocation of \$1.3 million in 1980-81 and \$2.1 million in 1981-82 would require new funds in 1981-82 only to establish the enquiry centre pilot projects.

31. Departments and agencies would only be required to pay costs ranging around \$200,000 in 1980-81 as directories containing the new numbers will only begin to be published in early 1981. This would be about \$10,000 per program and could probably be absorbed. In 1981-82 the system would not be fully complete until very late in the year and an average of approximately 50 to 60% of usage would appear reasonable based on the Ontario experience or \$50,000 to \$60,000 per program. The full \$2.0 million need not be applied until 1982-83. It should be noted, as well, that departments with existing Zenith services have them now budgeted for.

FEDERAL/PROVINCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

32. All provinces have been consulted on all aspects of the proposal with respect to the Access Project. While the discussions have been with officials, ministerial views have been sought in all provinces except Saskatchewan and British Columbia. In no case has there been direct or vocal opposition and, in fact, with the exception of British Columbia and Newfoundland, there is substantial enthusiasm. Provinces are changing their approach to match the lead of the federal government. In British Columbia and Newfoundland the evidence of other provinces support will influence their decision and they will likely participate. The two Territories have also agreed to participate.
33. The one significant exception to the work that has been done on the telephone system concerns the Province of Quebec. Using Bell Canada as an intermediary the "blue page" concept and service listings have been implemented and the Montreal book

due next November will contain consolidated government listings. No recent action has been taken, however, to negotiate a toll-free referral service that would be federal/provincial by nature. Initially, Quebec was included with the other provinces when the negotiations began in 1979. Communications Quebec indicated great interest and several preliminary discussions were held. No details or cost sharing arrangements were worked out. When the written expression of intent was sent to all provinces in early 1980, Quebec was included. No further communication has been initiated although Quebec responded to our written offer with a written agreement to negotiate.

34. Negotiations with Quebec will be difficult. It has an expensive but effective information system. It could handle federal government calls easily. The difficulties, of course, lie with the nature of their response. On the other hand, Quebec cannot be left without a referral system and to build a unilateral federal system only in Quebec would be expensive, obvious and basically unfair to the public who would have to make two or more calls if they became confused and called the wrong government for help. Our proposal is that we proceed with the negotiations and that we offer a system that is roughly compatible with that worked out with Ontario. The elements are:
- a) For information (referrals) on federal government programs and services the Quebec resident would (as in Ontario) be directed to call "Zenith Canada".
 - b) The Zenith operator would place the call to the appropriate Communications Quebec information technicians.
 - c) The information technician, recognizing that it is a federal government call would answer "Government of Canada" and refer the caller to the nearest appropriate federal government office. In most cases it can be switched at no cost to the caller.
 - d) A close monitoring of the system would ensure that federal government interests are maintained.

While this system would be slightly more expensive than in most provinces, it would be cost efficient as it would be less expensive than a unilateral federal system on even cost sharing the Communications Quebec budget. We would be charged only our easily identifiable line costs plus a small part of the direct costs of hiring and training a very few more information technicians. In addition, it would be almost identical to the Ontario system.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL CONSULTATIONS

35. An Interdepartmental Advisory Committee on Service to the Public was created in 1979 to review and comment on the work plan and progress of the Task Force. All the work undertaken by the Task Force has been endorsed by the Board and there have been periodic progress reports. In addition, the Deputy Minister - Services wrote to all Deputy Ministers and some head of agencies in April and May 1980 outlining the work of the Task Force in general and asking for support. The response was positive and each department and agency has assigned a senior official to work with the Task Force.

ALTERNATIVES

36. It is difficult to establish alternatives to providing toll-free access to key federal government services. The system that is proposed is essentially interrelated.

The problems are:

- a) If there is to be no toll-free service then the listings in directories can only include local numbers. If the service is not available locally then it cannot be listed and the federal government, consequently would again disappear from many directories.
 - b) If there are no toll-free services then the incentive for telephone companies to provide special blue pages would be considerably reduced and it would be difficult to get them to cooperate.
 - c) If there are no toll-free numbers the call load would shift to the central toll-free federal/provincial referral service. This is a more expensive form of service and the costs would escalate quite rapidly.
37. There are three possible alternatives to the proposal for field-testing a variety of facilities to handle face-to-face enquiries:
1. Take no action, leaving the present situation unchanged;
 2. Conduct another study centering on a rationalization of the various specialized services being offered by individual departments for specific clientele; and
 3. Use resources already approved for market testing an amalgamation of the existing "store front" facilities with a general inquiry service.

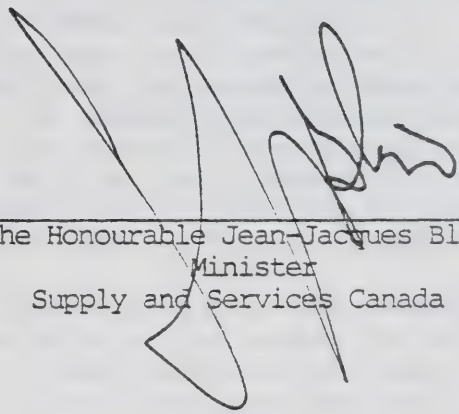
Accepting option two provides the opportunity for additional research but incorporates no provision for developing a federal presence. It would indicate how the needs are now met without opening the way to improving service. Option three offers a fragmented federal presence in certain major cities without any assurance that Canadians are getting answers to their problems. The kind of service provided may be far different than the demand and there is no flexibility to test the variations that could be available.

38. All proposals contained in this paper are, in themselves, public affairs oriented in that information is being provided to Canadians and their access to government is being improved. In addition, public relations activities should take place at the launch of each service and then progressively keep the public aware of progress.

It is proposed that the Minister make the announcement, supported by press releases and broadcast material, of each major thrust. For example, the Minister would announce that toll-free telephone service followed by regional statements as the system became operation. In the same way, an announcement and appropriate follow-up would be made on details of the inquiry centres. Speaking platforms would also be sought for the Minister to explain or announce the various aspects of public access and service delivery as they became operational.

While public servants are exposed to all other public relation initiatives, some will be aimed specifically at the public servants to ensure that they are fully informed. Articles for departmental publications, proposals for the Incentive Award Board and other initiatives are proposed.

A comprehensive public affairs schedule, involving all media, will be developed to ensure that maximum exposure is obtained over time.



The Honourable Jean-Jacques Blais
Minister
Supply and Services Canada

TASK FORCE ON SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC

The Task Force on Service to the Public was set up in July 1977, as part of the government's growing concern with the quality of service provided by the federal Public Service. The Task Force's terms of reference were to study and report on the quality of the federal government's service to the public and the public's perception of that service. To gather the necessary information, a national survey of over 2,200 Canadians was conducted. The Task Force disbanded following the publication of its findings and related recommendations.

The Task Force found that while many Canadians are satisfied with their direct dealings with the federal government, there is all too often the feeling that it is remote and inaccessible. It was found that those citizens who had experienced satisfactory contacts with the federal government were more favourable in their assessment of the entire Public Service. For example, respondents indicated satisfaction with 75% of their contacts with the federal government within the survey period. In addition, two thirds of the respondents expected that they would be treated fairly by a federal government office if there were some problem they had to take to them.

There is an apparent and somewhat surprising paradox therefore, between the views the public holds as to the adequacy of service they personally have received in their individual dealings with the public service and, conversely, their general perceptions of the quality of service and the calibre of the public service, many of which are reflected below.

In general, the Task Force found that:

- (i) The public approached government apprehensively. They expect that there will be an adversary encounter and that "things will not go right".
- (ii) There is an attitude prevalent that the public has a right to expect the public servant to have all the answers and to do most of the work in any transaction. The public takes a "passive" approach to its own responsibilities and therefore when the public servant requires a form to be filled out or must obtain additional information he is perceived to be offering poor service and to be entangled in "red tape".
- (iii) The government is perceived to be a poor employer from the point of view of delivering a high quality service. It does not exact sufficient effort from the employees and complaints invariably disappear into the system. Government cannot lose "business" and therefore it cannot be effectively "hurt".
- (iv) The public is suspicious about public servants, seeing them as poorly motivated and substantially of a lower social strata than those working in the private sector.
- (v) The federal government is remote - more so than provincial or municipal governments. It also tends to be anonymous. This leads to less personalized service and more difficulties.

- (vi) The public generally is unaware of the programs and services offered by government with the exception of the major service areas such as Post Office, Taxation, etc. In general, except for those major services, access to government was considered a major problem - especially if the individual was trying to obtain information by telephone. The major concern was the problem inherent in finding the right person.
- (vii) One of the significant concerns expressed, one related to access, was the difficulty in being served promptly and effectively in government offices. Lineups and the lack of clear identification of the right place to go for help were frequently cited.
- (viii) Another major issue is "citizen satisfaction" - satisfaction at the end of a transaction. The general view was that if there was any complication in any transaction, the potential for disaster was high. There were, in this area, two strong indictments of the federal public service - a straightforward lack of ability or knowledge on the part of the public servant, and a real lack of sensitivity to the needs of the "customer". It is this latter criticism that led to the most bitterness amongst respondents.
- (ix) The public perception of public service is that it is poorer than it was in 1968, public servants are not as helpful, and service delivery is poorer than that of any other level of government or any major private sector corporation.

The Task Force originally was a part of Treasury Board for it was conceived as a part of a thrust toward policy development that would include effectiveness indicators. Following the re-establishment of the Task Force in December of 1978, it appeared as though it would need to take on operational responsibilities, it was considered more appropriate for it to be transferred to a service-oriented agency. The transfer to Services was also seen as a gain as it provided an opportunity for the Task Force to benefit from the personal direction of the Deputy Minister and to have more rapid access to the Minister and Cabinet.

Starting in 1979, Task Force members visited regional directors, program managers and information officers in all regions of Canada to discuss progress made by departments and central agencies and to learn of continuing matters of concern.

Also at this time an Advisory Board on Service to the Public was created to ensure that all departments and agencies with a significant service operation were aware of the activities of the Task Force and participated in its direction.

The work program of the Task Force was approved by Cabinet in November 1979.

SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC

A STUDY OF ENQUIRY SYSTEMS

DPA Consulting Limited

June 18, 1980

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

It is the purpose of this study to review the delivery of service to the public through enquiry systems and enquiry centres, to develop potential alternatives and to propose a pilot testing program.. Enquiry systems here exclude phone-in systems, because of already existing federal/provincial arrangements in this field.

A broad and innovative range of physical facilities and organisational arrangements for enquiry centres has been developed and examined. As part of this study, the need for enquiry centres and systems has been addressed from both the demand and supply aspects. Finally, a pilot program has been developed and recommended to evaluate within a structured research design the various costs, benefits, effectiveness and design aspects of each option.

The physical facilities for in-person visits include:

- Walk-In Centres (offices, store fronts)
- Itinerant Information Officers (visiting communities by car or van)
- Carrells (unattended counters or desks equipped with information resource facilities)
- Departmental Public Enquiry Services (information specialists attached to a government department regional or local office).

These facilities are introduced into a set of five organisational options with different jurisdictional relationships and featuring a particular design characteristic:

- A. Federal Presence: a single coordinated government-wide system, fully funded and operated by the federal government and with wide national coverage.
- B. Multi-Government: federal/provincial/municipal sponsorship and joint operation.
- C. Community Based: organized and operated by local community with some federal involvement.

- D. Accountability: incorporating two-way information flow (to and from individual citizens) and political representation.
- E. Departmental Public Enquiry Service: operated by each federal department individually, with information specialists available to answer questions and direct enquiries across the whole federal government.

For each of these modules on facilities, and options, the actual level of service provided directly to the enquiring citizen could vary from a simple referral to the correct person, address or phone number, to providing substantial assistance in search for information, counselling people regarding their problems and helping them fill out forms. The specific level of service provided is a policy decision and one which the government may decide to move into gradually. The key is that the level of service can vary by policy decision of the government -- it is not locked into the physical or organizational arrangements.

The full operating cost of Option A is estimated at \$7.5 to \$8 million and costs approximately \$0.40 per person of population covered.

A pilot program is proposed which, with research, design, field testing and evaluation is estimated to cost \$2.3 million over eighteen months.

Conclusions

A variety of studies and surveys have shown that there is considerable public dissatisfaction in dealing with the large and complex federal government organization. Despite the enormous number of enquiries received by the government every day, there is no coordinated or consistent system provided to handle this traffic. It is important to recognize, however, that there are both risks and opportunities in attempting to deliver the required service to the public.

The risks arise from establishing an information system that does not provide the information and services required to satisfy the particular needs of enquiring citizens. There are also inherent risks in any system that provides more and better information on a broad scale but is not accompanied by systems providing for feedback from the public and for improving the design or delivery of actual federal services and programs.

The opportunities exist in the variety of ways that the information needs of the people can be recognized and dealt with. This study notes the large flow of enquiries to government for answers to citizens' questions and the types of assistance that people need -- and shows why the present system breaks down.

The evaluation component, incorporated in the Pilot Program is proposed to ensure that care is taken to develop an information and assistance program that will respond to the needs of the people and at the same time satisfy government objectives.

1. INTRODUCTION

In April 1980 DPA Consulting Limited was asked by the Task Force on Service to the Public to conduct a study of Enquiry Systems, to examine present and past experience of others in this field, to develop alternate enquiry systems for the federal government, and to propose a pilot program.

Studies and surveys undertaken by the Task Force and others have shown that there is a low level of awareness throughout the Canadian public of the many services provided by the federal government. Moreover, in many cases those in need of assistance are not sure where to go to get the help they require. Government regulations are increasing and the need for providing the citizen with easy access to government information over a wide range of topics is steadily growing. Most individual federal government departments have regional offices where the public can go for assistance. However, the federal government has no convenient one stop place for citizens throughout Canada to visit, to get information about any or all programs, regulations and activities. The results of these studies and surveys indicate that the federal presence, particularly in Western Canada, is not perceived by the public as positive, effective, efficient or even easy to access.

As a first step in the field of direct contact, the Task Force conducted studies and commenced negotiations for the implementation of Enquiry Systems in Canada based on the telephone system. Efforts by the Task Force to establish a telephone based Enquiry System were well advanced by April 1980. DPA was required therefore to focus this study to other personal contact systems, such as Walk-In Centres and Information Officers in readily accessible places which are conveniently located for the maximum number of Canadians throughout the country.

This report begins then with a definition and description of Walk-In Centres and the various forms these may take throughout Canada to ensure the maximum access of citizens to reliable and useful information on the federal government and its various programs, services and activities. The report concludes with a recommended pilot program to move as rapidly as possible to test the various alternatives and the ways in which they can best be linked in an effective and efficient national system.

2. ENQUIRY CENTRES

2.1 DEFINITION

An Enquiry Centre is a facility designed to respond to public enquiries for information concerning government programs, services, activities, regulations and organizations. Enquiry Centres may vary in size and nature in:

- the level of service provided;
- the means of communication with the public;
- the level of access afforded to various segments of the public;
- the sponsorship and jurisdiction under which the unit falls;
- the source of financial support;
- the extent of accountability.

2.1.1 Level of Service

The level of service can vary from; a quick referral of an enquiry to another person or telephone number, to a counselling or problem solving session or other direct assistance (eg. help in filling out a form) of an hour or more, to a research or data gathering activity stretching over several days. For purposes of planning, the service given has been classified into three levels as follows.

Level I - Referral only. The enquiry may require brief discussion to clarify the question, then a referral is given to an appropriate person, a document or other specific reference. Contact time on average is three minutes.

Level II - Information search and retrieval, and follow-up response. Enquiries require some diagnosis and discussion and search for the most suitable source of information to resolve the problem; several follow-up calls (e.g. to the responsible program agency) might be required, or some search through reference material. Time for this level of service is an average of 15 minutes per enquiry.

Level III - Service Centre. This level of service provides information, research, advice and counsel to enquirers to assist them to resolve problems and search for and compile data as required. It is not simply a referral or an information centre, but more appropriately a Service Centre and may operate some services, either without direct charge or on a cost recovery basis. Time for this level of service on average would be up to 1 day.

2.1.2 Means of Communication

Telephone enquiry systems, using Zenith and WATS lines are already being developed by the Task Force to operate as federal-provincial systems. In the Walk-In Centres it is planned to have telephone service available to the staff of the Centre, where the staff member would have access to the resource network to seek information. The telephones in the Walk-In Centres may not be available directly to the public -- normally they would use the federal-provincial system directly themselves from their home, place of work or elsewhere.

Basic to the various Enquiry Centre models considered here is the "in-person" contact.

2.1.3 Level of Access

Ease of access to the Enquiry System is a necessary design characteristic and requires that accommodation be provided for all citizens to use the service. This means that both official languages must be served, facilities for the handicapped be considered in the design of the premises, various socio-economic groups be provided for, and remote areas be also considered if universal service is to be made available.

2.1.4 Sponsorship and Jurisdiction

To a significant extent the general public does not have a precise idea of the jurisdictional differences between, and the consequent services provided by, the various levels of government in Canada (i.e. federal, provincial and municipal).

To a considerable degree therefore the public would be better served by having a central point of access for all (or most) public services irrespective of the jurisdiction. There are already in existence Enquiry Centres sponsored and funded by the various provincial and municipal governments across Canada and as well there are many more which are sponsored by community organizations. The latter are usually organized on a voluntary community basis with a board of directors of interested citizens. The federal government has already directly assisted in the establishment, operations and even the funding of some of these provincial, municipal and community based enquiry centres -- albeit on an ad hoc basis. Enquiry centres which incorporate direct co-operation with, or even joint operation by, other levels of government and community based organizations may well provide a higher level of service to the public. The opportunity for such a co-operative approach is raised here and would be further tested in the Pilot Program.

In France an information service is provided by private enterprise on a subscription basis. Private enterprise is another source of jurisdiction, and consideration should be given to contracting out the information service.

2.1.5 Source of Financial Support

Depending on the jurisdiction, level of co-operation with other governments and community based organizations, the financial support for Enquiry Centres can vary. For citizens' information and referral systems now in operation the sources of support include: community funds (e.g. United Way), municipal funds, provincial grants and federal grants. There are many enquiry centres, which do not receive federal money, that receive and respond to questions from citizens about federal programs, services and regulations. As an example, the 54 Community Information Centres in Ontario estimate that currently 15-20% of their calls refer to federal matters. Their financial support comes from United Way, municipal and provincial sources.

2.1.6 Extent of Accountability

In an information referral or Enquiry System the citizen is at the end of the line of information flow. It would be helpful to build in a citizens' response mechanism which provides some measure of accountability for the services rendered. One of the Enquiry System options presented (D) includes the Member of Parliament in the Enquiry Centre organization as a representative of the political process. In this arrangement, the citizen is no longer at the end of the line but an integral part of a system with government accountability and a citizens' response mechanism built in.

Considerable innovation may be required to determine an acceptable operational solution to this option:

- the MP, or his office, must have a meaningful role in the system to ensure a strong and independent feedback for citizens' views and complaints on specific services and programs to ensure a meaningful concept of "accountability" while not adding any massive new workload to the already heavy responsibility of MP's and their staff;
- care must be taken to ensure confidentiality of material and to protect the objectivity of departments.

If these, and other, problems can be overcome, there may be exciting possibilities for this option or variations thereon.

2.2 TYPES OF ENQUIRY CENTRES AND ENQUIRY MODULES

Walk-In Centres and other in-person Enquiry Systems fall into four major groups -- Walk-In, Carrell, Mobile Service and Departmental Public Enquiry Systems.

2.2.1 Walk-In

A Walk-In Enquiry Centre would normally be an office or store-front location which can be in a suburban shopping centre, a city core location, a main-street store-front or in a federal building. It stands on its own as a place for the public to conveniently walk in to get information or assistance relative to government programs, regulations or activities. It is independent of, and not associated with, any single government department. It can function as a location to give information and assistance to citizens who walk in asking for it, or it can perform an outreach function to distribute information to the people in its area of coverage and increase awareness of government services.

The size of staff can range from an office with three or four (or more) paid employees to one that has volunteers or even no staff at all. Equipment and resource facilities can include: telephone, reference books, government telephone books, directories, card indexes, computer terminals, open shelves of publications, and files.

2.2.2 Carrell

This is a facility similar to study carrells used by students (e.g. in libraries) -- a partly enclosed shelf, counter or desk, that has reference material and equipment available. It can act as a mini-enquiry centre, with reference books, writing materials, some posters and pamphlets and possibly a computer terminal for information retrieval and communication. It would be given a few hours a month attention for upkeep and maintenance by a near-by employee of the organization that was housing the unit, or perhaps a volunteer. Carrells could be located in such

places as shopping centres, lobbies of buildings, Post Offices, Employment Centres and public libraries.

2.2.3 Mobile Enquiry Systems

There are three main types of mobile enquiry systems:

- a travelling van
- a travelling person
- exhibits and displays

a) A Travelling Van

A travelling van may be envisaged as a vehicle equipped as a walk-in reference facility which would travel about the country visiting the smaller communities. It would be staffed with one or two trained information officers and equipped with reference material. It might also be equipped with a telephone and a computer terminal. The level of service would include providing information on government services, activities, programs and regulations, and attempting to resolve problems citizens would have with government services, or filling out forms and applications. Having a telephone and computer terminal would provide extensive back-up resource facilities.

The schedule of the Travelling Enquiry Centre would be announced in advance in public places in the communities where it would travel. Senior citizens, young people and those wanting information on starting and running a small business are frequent users of Walk-In Centres and such people could prepare for the visit and have questions ready for presentation.

b) A Travelling Person

An Information Officer would travel among the smaller communities using a car and taking with him/her the necessary reference material, using the local phone for back-up and perhaps carrying a portable computer terminal.

The level of service offered would range from providing information on government matters to discussing problems

citizens have with government regulations and services, and providing responses to general questions. Space would be found in the community for setting up information exhibits and for in-person discussions of problems on government services and responding to questions. Advance announcements would be posted in public places so that people could be prepared for the visit.

c) Travelling Exhibits and Displays

Exhibits and displays as conceived here would be best operated out of a larger Enquiry Centre in the region as an extension service. These exhibits and displays would be staffed by the personnel of the local Centre. The level of service provided could vary from issue of pamphlets to responding to general enquiries and even resolving of difficulties that citizens might have with government services or information.

2.2.4 Departmental Public Enquiry Service

In individual departments, particularly in regional offices where there is frequent in-person contact with the public, Information Officers will be trained and available to respond to citizens' enquiries covering all aspects of government activities. It is current practice to train all public servants who have contact with the public to respond to enquiries in an efficient and courteous manner. However, this proposal of a Departmental Public Enquiry Service is unique in that designated officers will be trained and made available to handle enquiries not only about their own department, but of all government activities. The level of service will be determined at a government-wide policy level and can be simply referral, or up to Level III, the problem solving, counselling and research level.

Care would be taken to provide to the public the image of a government-wide Enquiry Service by the physical facilities and signage, and the service rendered.

2.3 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Two developments in information technology should be pointed out that will inevitably have a major impact on the information service to the public of the federal government. One is the computer terminal and the other is TELIDON.

The computer terminal has been used in a community environment where citizens were invited to access it. In a demonstration project in San Francisco terminals were placed in a music store and a public library, left turned on, unattended, with instructions posted on the counter or desk where it sat. These terminals were used 70% of the available time.¹ Such a system would provide citizen access to information on government programs and regulations and could be wired to accept messages, which would be responded to within minutes by information officers at a distant central office.

The second technological development, of which the Task Force is already aware, is the Department of Communication's TELIDON. In a relatively few years this facility will probably be in many, if not most, homes in Canada. It can be the most easily accessed source of information on government programs, regulations and activities for the average citizen, providing the data banks are prepared and put on line. Such a system has cost recovery potential or may be operated by private enterprise to provide federal government information.

These are important developments and can, when both the hardware and software are at the appropriate level, be made available to provide improved government information services to the public. The computer terminal could be introduced to any of the Enquiry System modules as soon as the programs and data banks become available.

1. Community Memory Project, 916 Parker St., Berkeley, Calif. 94703.

3. THE PRESENT SYSTEM
SUPPLY AND DEMAND OF
GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES

3.1 WHAT IS THE DEMAND FOR INFORMATION FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT?

There is no consistent data on enquiries to the federal government. Our own survey of the various information officers and groups in nine major federal departments indicates that there appears to be a total of between 25 and 40 million direct enquiries made annually.¹⁾ These figures specifically exclude direct "over the counter" contact for such services as buying stamps, mailing letters and packages, registering for UI benefits and obtaining income tax forms.

A survey of 81 management staff and 178 operational level staff in the federal government, conducted by the Task Force on Service to the Public in 1978/79, indicated these public servants felt that up to 90% of all telephone enquiries have to be redirected because they have been made to the wrong contact person. Even if this figure is assumed to be very high, experience indicates that the real figure is unlikely to be less than 60%.

In addition, our survey of provincially operated enquiry centres indicates that between 20% and 40% of the enquiries they receive relate to federal government services. A rough but indicative, estimate of the number of federally oriented enquiries currently being made through provincial enquiry centres is at least three quarters of a million a year. Virtually all of these federal enquiries have found their way to the provincial organization. Even with the general interest of provincial public servants to redirect accurately such

1) CEIC, Agriculture, NHW, Revenue Canada, Past Office, EMR, IT&C, Stats Canada, Labour

enquiries it is likely that at least another two calls on average are required before a citizen makes direct contact with the "right" federal public servant. It should also be noted that these are enquiries made of enquiry centres and do not include any estimate of enquiries made directly to provincial departments.

In summary it appears that:

1. There is a very heavy demand for information on government services and programs.
2. The public has no one-stop point of enquiry and is confused as to where to contact the proper government source.

What little information there is available on the nature of demand -- e.g. the characteristics of people making enquiries -- shows that

1. the financially disadvantaged, including senior citizens
2. small business operators
3. those with family problems (e.g. housing, health)

are among the most frequent users of enquiry systems.

The Manitoba telephone enquiry system (presently a joint provincial/federal agency) lists the following types of requests for information in order of frequency:

- pensions, family income, old age pension
- customs
- employment (and unemployment)
- taxation
- passports
- citizenship

From our observations of different types of Enquiry Systems, it would appear that the nature of the system often influences the type of demand. Systems can be designed to address the academic, business and institutional market (e.g. Statistics Canada, Industry Trade and Commerce Business Information Centres) or the socially disadvantaged sector of the community (Community Information Centres). Enquiries coming into a general federal information system will undoubtedly be influenced by the central policy established, by the characteristics designed into the Centre, and by the training given to the operating front-line staff.

The results of our surveys indicate that when a well developed and efficiently operated enquiry system is operating with both telephone and walk-in components, the proportion of enquiries via the phone significantly exceeds those via walk-in facilities. It also appears that when there is no organized enquiry system, or a poorly operated one, the proportion of enquiries via the phone is roughly equal to those via walk-in contact.

One result of this, depending on the physical and organizational options and the level of service provided, may be that the cost per enquiry via walk-in centres will usually be higher than the cost via phone systems. In interpreting such cost differences, however, other factors should be kept in mind. These include:

- the potential for increased federal government visibility through walk-in centres;
- the potential for handling more complex problems in face to face situations; and,
- the potential for providing a more direct, more personal and higher level of service via walk-in centres than via the phone.

3.2 THE SUPPLY OF INFORMATION ON GOVERNMENT SERVICES

The present federal 'system' for disseminating information and for responding to enquiries from citizens is fragmented along departmental lines and by level of service and jurisdiction. In short, there is no national central enquiry service providing access to federal government programs, services, activities and organization. At the regional level some federal departments are the only contact the public may recognize, e.g. Post Office -- approximately 8,000 offices; Employment & Immigration -- approximately 420 offices; Agriculture Canada -- 47 research stations. The majority of the provinces have recognized the public's dilemma and currently most provinces offer a co-ordinated and integrated enquiry/information service.

Most cities in Canada have locally organized community based centres which provide referral to appropriate social agencies for citizens in the neighbourhood. The majority of enquiries come via telephone rather than in-person. As an example, a community information centre in Ottawa, and one in Vancouver, each receive just over 10,000 calls a year over 90% of which are by telephone. Mail usually accounts for less than 1% of the enquiries received. As noted previously some 15-20% of these community based and provincial centres are for information relevant to federal government activities.

International Experience

The United States, United Kingdom, and France each have national information and referral services. In the United States, Federal Information (FI) Centres respond to public enquiries either directly or by referral to the appropriate Agency. There are 38 FI Centres and 40 Telephone tie-line locations serving 55% of the U.S.

population on a local call basis. They are funded and staffed by the Federal Government. As an example of this system, the FI Centre in Buffalo receives 10,000 calls a year and covers one half of New York State by telephone tie-lines. In-person contacts are about six a day -- a very low figure even after taking into account the poor physical location and the lack of facilities.

The purpose of the Citizens' Advice Bureaux Service in the United Kingdom is to make available to individuals accurate information and skilled advice on many problems arising in daily life. The 700 local bureaux respond to three million enquiries annually. They receive co-ordination and some training from the Central U.K. Government but not direct funding. A unique feature is the encouragement of provision for two-way communication between citizens and the agency, on government matters.

In France, a commercial information service -- SVP -- is provided by a private agency. The SVP service includes extensive information on government programs and services. Technical specialists research and respond to all enquiries including: commercial and technical services; general, social and fiscal legislation; economics and financial management; and, cultural services. The service is by subscription and is an interesting example of the possibilities for contracting out information services. Most users appear to be institutional, and presumably the commercial element of SVP mitigates against extending it to some of the less privileged segments of society unless there is some form of public subsidy.

Given the present demand for information and assistance from the federal government it should be noted that this may represent only part of the total potential need. If,

as the surveys show, there is still a lack of knowledge of government services available, then a properly designed service to the public may well increase the public demand and also, of course, the public satisfaction.

3.3 SHORTCOMINGS AND GAPS IN THE PRESENT SYSTEM

Shortcomings in the present system of government delivery of service to the public, to a great extent, fall into two groups:

Access, and
Awareness.

Access refers to the problems of finding the proper place to go to get the information desired, or to resolve problems relating to government programs or activities.

Awareness refers to problems caused by a lack of knowledge -- ie. not even being aware of what government information or services exists to be of help. It should be noted here that in many cases it is not only the public, but also the public servant who is unaware of the information from government sources that would be helpful in resolving a particular problem.

Another shortcoming in the interface between the government and the public is the inadequate rate of flow of information both ways. The present information flow is primarily downwards, from the government department to the citizen. Also there is very little emphasis on feedback and what structured feedback exists is either infrequent (e.g. Royal Commissions) or "managed" by departments. The comments on accountability in section 2.1.6. refer to this constraint in information flow. To illustrate the point, the Citizens Advice Bureaux in the United Kingdom encourages, records and passes upwards the comments from citizens on government policies, programs, and services.

Some centres are not equipped to provide equal access to information, for certain sectors of the population, e.g. the aged, the less educated, those speaking a different language, and the handicapped.

A number of factors presently contribute to the mechanism break-down of present information delivery systems:

- complexity and magnitude of the government organization
- differing interests/priorities of the delivery agencies,
- entry points unknown to users
- attitude and lack of knowledge of public servants
- internal departmental network too complex even for individual public servants
- lack of quality control of service delivery
- locus of control (within departments and overall government) varied and uncertain.

These are some of the problems and shortcomings of the present system of delivery of service to the public, with which the design of Enquiry Systems will attempt to deal.

4. DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

The design of an enquiry system must take into consideration a number of factors relevant to the needs of both the user and the supplier. The major factors of concern to be included in the design criteria are:

TABLE I
DESIGN CRITERIA

1. Jurisdiction (Federal; Federal/Provincial; Tri-Level; Integrated Community)
2. Service/Level of Activity

Level I	Referral only
Level II	search & response
Level III	Service
3. Operational Factors
 - distinctive identification (name/logo/visibility) for enquiry service;
 - federal language requirements;
 - skill, training and professional technical level of enquiry information specialists;
 - facilities, data base and resources;
 - feedback and quality control.
4. Penetration and Service Coverage
(service market penetration per 1,000 population, resources by community size and location, scope for using existing departmental structures and mandates);
5. Federal Presence (image, linguistic requirements, visibility);
6. Access and Availability (structure, location, facilities, means of communication, service tactics);
7. Accountability (political, accountability, bureaucratic, inter-governmental, public responsibility);
8. Cost (impact of restraint, service design, shared funding, cost recovery);
9. Contracting Out (supermarket display racks).

5. PROPOSED OPTIONS

5.1 THE LOGIC

Five options were designed for the delivery of service to the public. These five options use various applications of the modules described in section 2 -- Walk-in centres, travelling van or person, carrells, departmental information specialists. The five options also incorporate the various design criteria identified in section 4 in such a way that they most readily facilitate the comparability and evaluation of a wide range of variables. The five options are:

- A. Federal Presence
- B. Multi-level Government Sponsorships
- C. Community Based
- D. Accountability
- E. Departmental Public Enquiry Service

Before describing the functioning of each of the options a few remarks are in order on points common to each of the five.

Federal presence has been featured in Option A but its degree should be noted in each of the others. In Option B, C & D the federal support would be there, but the administration and control would be the responsibility of other governments or the local community, and federal presence would be minimal. In Option E, federal presence would be high but effort would be required to provide the government-wide image of the Service.

Level of service would be provided at I, II, III i.e. from referral to research and counselling, according to policy set by the government for the national service.

The degree of promotion, or outreach, to create a stronger public awareness of government services and the Enquiry System, will be also a matter of national policy for the system. It should be noted however that the potential for

this, as provided by the physical network proposed, is quite high. It can inform the public in a variety of ways:

- promoting federal government services as a whole in a way similar to Information Canada using a wide variety of media and literature distribution,
- creating an increased awareness of the Enquiry System itself as a service of the public, through staff public appearances, exhibits and displays and announcements through the local media,
- placing the Walk-In Centres and other Enquiry System modules in publicly strategic locations and providing effective signage, identity and hand-out literature.

5.2 THE FIVE OPTIONS

Option A -- Federal Presence

The features of this option are the use of several types of in-person Enquiry Centres and Enquiry Services to provide wide coverage of the population. High visibility is provided by having:

- Walk-In Centres in cities of over 30,000 people
- Itinerant Information Officers serving cities and towns with a population of 10,000 to 30,000 people; and
- a large number of carrells, some in communities of 10,000 to 30,000 people and a larger number in the smaller communities of less than 10,000 people.

The Walk-In Centres would be placed and staffed according to local needs. In each of the cities of Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver one large Walk-In Centre is proposed supported by two satellite centres in strategic locations. In other cities or metro areas (over 30,000 people) one Walk-In Centre is proposed, with staff varying from 2 to 5 depending on the size of the city. In cities or metro areas with less than 30,000 people an itinerant Information Officer would be provided. This person would schedule visits to

designated communities in the region - public announcements of the date of visits would be made in advance. Appropriate community education would be required for all these Enquiry modules to ensure an awareness on the part of the citizens served by the centre.

This Option provides for extensive coverage of the population and communities across Canada. Because of the diversity of approaches and the optional levels of service (the selection of which is a matter of policy for the government) there is no reason for this system to appear as a reincarnation of Information Canada. On the other hand some of the better features of Information Canada could be readily integrated into Option A. The key to Option A is that it provides a variety of functional approaches which can be mixed and matched to the size, shape and diversity of communities and population concentrations throughout the community.

The direct operating costs for Option A is estimated at \$7.7 million as described further in Sections 5.3 & 6.

Option B -- Multi-Government

In this Option the market coverage is assumed to be the same as in Option A. The difference is that the program would be supported by two, or three, tiers of government -- federal, provincial, municipal. Because of the differences among the ten Provinces and the two Territories, it is unlikely that there would be only one type of Enquiry System which would be most appropriate and put in place on a national basis. It is possible that each province and territory would be different, both in the mixture and distribution of modules and in the organization and support of the Enquiry System structure.

In each case, it would be necessary to resolve questions such as -- who owns it? who runs it? and who sponsors it to what extent? Where there is strong provincial government support it would likely evolve that the identification of the Enquiry System will be neutral (e.g. as a separate operation), or provincial. This option, if successful in its operation may well provide a high level of service to the public in any given community. On the other hand, because of the split jurisdiction/sponsorship, the difficulties of effectively delivering a uniformly high standard of service would be magnified. Further, because of the proximity of the provincial and municipal levels, the federal government may well find it difficult to maintain a strong separate identity and the federal presence may be relatively low for the money spent.

The federal cost of Option B would be a share of the total cost depending on the formula devised for division of total cost among the supporting governments and agencies.

Option C -- Community Based

A community based enquiry system would place the initiative for organizing and administering the enquiry centre operations primarily on the community being served. The funding could come either from federal sources entirely or from federal plus local and/or other governments. In our survey of Information Centres no community organized centres were found that were wholly federally financed. A number were found that received financial support from a variety of sources, including some governments.

A starter model would be a community based Enquiry Centre which would receive a good share of financial support from the federal government, for a secretary-administrator plus staff training for all personnel, resource materials and promotional services. The Centre would have a local board of directors which would be responsible for the activities and the budget, and would recruit either volunteer labour or find other sources of funds.

The contributor of funds would be entitled to receive periodic reports of activities so that monitoring, analysis and corrective action could be carried out where required.

It is suggested that the cost to the federal government for supporting such an Enquiry Centre would include:

- salary of an administrator-coordinator who would be secretary to the board of directors, responsible for raising additional funds, hiring paid or obtaining volunteer staff and operating the centre;
- an amount sufficient to provide rent and office supplies and telephone;
- training of staff in information services;

- provision of information resources, including directories and reference materials, pamphlets and literature for distribution.

The cost of a unit of this type, to include the above items, would be about \$30,000 per year.

Option D -- Accountability

The feature of this option is the two way flow or exchange of information to and from the public. The public would have access to information on general and specific aspects of the government and its programs via the enquiry centres. In turn the government would receive feedback from the public on its programs, and their delivery, via a relatively independent process which would incorporate MPs, and/or their staff, in a role which would effectively guarantee the objectivity and accountability of the feedback mechanism. It is proposed that Enquiry Centres be organized by the local community in which the Centre operated and be administered by them. It will be funded chiefly, but not necessarily entirely, by the federal government. Local groups will be encouraged to participate. The level of service will also be a local determination, but the possibility of providing Level III service (research, problem solving, counselling) should be considered for some cases. A third feature of this proposal is that it would be designed to provide the facility for TWO-WAY communication. Citizens would be able to communicate into their governments and record complaints, suggestions, opinions. To make this effective, the board of directors of the unit must have some representation from the MPs in the area, and the MPs or their staff should have a direct role in following up on extraordinary problems and in ensuring full and appropriate consideration of feedback on program contents and delivery. (see diagram p. 26).

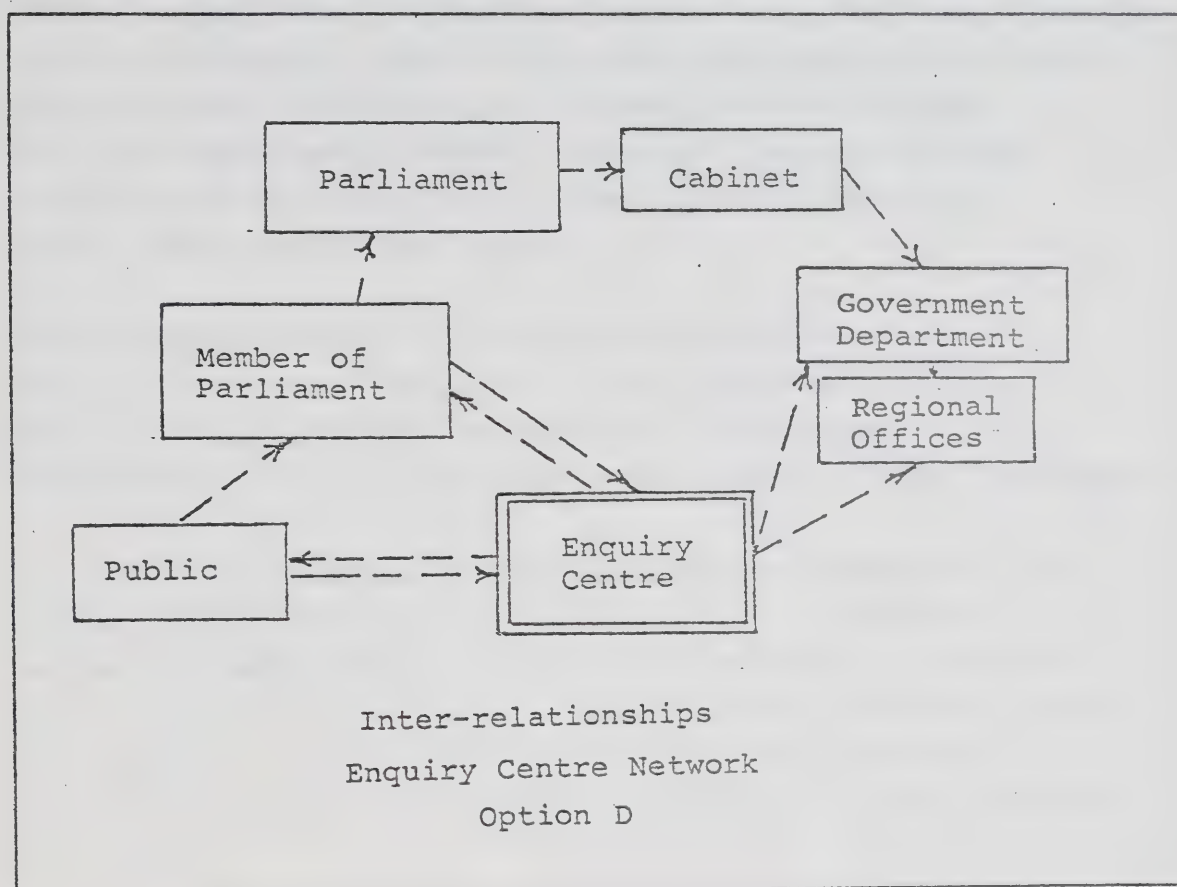
A special name and identity would be useful in the successful operation of such a citizen based information service.

It is suggested that the cost to the federal government for supporting such an Enquiry Centre would include:

- salary of an administrator-coordinator who would be secretary to the board of directors, responsible for raising additional funds, hiring paid or obtaining volunteer staff and operating the Centre;

- an amount sufficient to provide rent, office supplies and telephone;
- training of staff in information services;
- provision of information resources, including directories, reference materials, pamphlets and literature for distribution.

The cost of a unit of this type, to include the above items, would be about \$30,000 per year.



Option E -- Departmental Public Enquiry Service

There are a number of government agencies that have regional and local outlets - some on a very large scale. The Post Office, Canada Employment Centres and Agriculture Canada are examples. In this option it is proposed to train information officers to handle government wide enquiries from the public and provide mini Enquiry Centres as a regular ongoing responsibility of departments, in selected government offices across Canada. For purposes of evaluating the scope and significance of this particular Option other forms of Enquiry Centres (e.g. Walk-In, Carrells) are not included. Costs and market coverage will be based on an Enquiry System using the facilities of already existing government offices. Some of the mini-Centres would be staffed with one or more officers and some would employ part-time persons.

This Enquiry Service would be distinguished from a Walk-In Centre as described in the definition (Section 2) by it being physically attached to, and located in, a Department office or facility, and staffed by that Department.

It would be essential to the successful operation of this Option that a Regional Council be set up, comprised of senior representatives of government departments operating in the region. This Council would provide guidance, support and direction for maximizing community contribution, particularly if it also contained members from the community at large.

Cost of establishing one unit of this type of service would include:

- salary of one staff member trained as an Information Officer, or in some instances the part-time cost of such a person;

- periodic training -- say two sessions of one week duration per year;
- resource materials, for reference and for distribution;
- promotion costs and facilities, to ensure that the public is made aware of the availability of the service.

Costs per unit would then range from about \$14,000 to \$28,000 per year.

5.3 COSTS OF AN ENQUIRY SYSTEM

To provide an indication of the order of magnitude for the total ongoing costs of a program such as this, Option A, featuring Federal Presence has been costed out as a national program. As indicated here, the cost of Option A on a national basis would be in the order of \$7.5 to \$8 million. This includes a number of Walk-In Centres, the use of Itinerant Information Officers and the use of two sizes of Carrells. All of these Enquiry System modules are allocated to communities on a population basis to provide a reasonable degree of market coverage.

A central administration staff would be required to cover policy, planning, development and administration. To manage a program of this size and scope would require a central and administrative staff of some 50 people. The distribution of modules to communities for Option A and the costs of these with that of the headquarters administrative unit are shown in Table II. Further details of these costs are shown in the Appendix.

Table II
OPTION "A"
Distribution and Annual Cost of Enquiry System

	<u>Staff</u> <u>per centre/unit</u>	<u>Cost per Year</u> <u>per Module</u>	<u>No. of</u> <u>Modules</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>
<u>I Walk-In Centres</u>				
Cities over 1 million				
a) major	7	\$168,000	3	\$ 504,000
b) satellite	3	63,000	6	378,000
c) Cities 500,000 - 1 million	5	124,000	8	996,800
d) Provincial Capitals	5	119,700	3	359,100
e) Cities 100,000 - 500,000	4	93,400	12	1,120,800
f) Cities 30,000 - 100,000	2	45,300	41	1,857,300
<u>II Itinerant Information Officer</u>				
Communities 10,000 - 30,000	1	19,200	20	384,000
<u>III Carrell</u>				
a) Communities less than 10,000	0	1,000	160	160,000
b) Villages	0	300	1,000	300,000
National Administration Unit	50			<u>1,612,800</u>
TOTAL				\$7,672,800

The determination of the cost of the system in terms of dollars per person covered by the Enquiry Service gives a useful figure to assess the cost of market penetration and also a cost of federal presence. This is shown in Table III below.

Table III

Direct Costs of Enquiry System
per Person of Coverage

<u>Location</u>	<u>Population Coverage</u>	<u>Module</u>	<u>Staff per Unit</u>	<u>Annual Cost per person of coverage</u>
Major metro	over 1 million	Walk-In Centre	(7, 3, 3)	\$0.13
Metro	500k to 1 mil.	"	(5)	0.32
City	100k to 500k	"	(4)	0.50
City	30k to 100k	"	(2)	0.88
Towns	10k to 30k	Itinerant I. O.	(1)	0.15*
	10k to 30k	Carrell	-	0.12
Villages	less than 30k	"	-	0.12

*Assumes an average distribution of one Itinerant office for 3 communities within this community group. Itinerant services will be provided to the largest communities within this community group.

It must be noted that this "annual cost per person of coverage" does not correspond to cost per enquiry. Walk-In Centres have a relatively low number of walk-in visitors per day compared to the number of phone calls to a telephone Enquiry Centre, but the quality of contact is also different. This is dealt with in Section 3.1.

An examination of 12 Enquiry Systems indicates a wide range in the number of calls (including telephone, walk-in, mail) per person of population covered by the service. However, a value of 0.08 (i.e. 80 enquiries per 1,000 population per year) appears to be the most reasonable figure for this.

The number of enquiries that come in to an Enquiry Walk-In Centre has been estimated from data received from

existing services. This indicates that 20% of all calls would be a reasonable estimate of the proportion that are in-person contacts. This figure may well vary according to the size and type of community as well as other factors, but, at this point, no figures are available on such differences.

Data is not available for cost per enquiry for itinerant Information Officers or carrells. However, if an itinerant officer, by advance notification of his visit to a town of 20,000 people, was able to schedule interviews with 20 people a day for 5 days a week, the cost per "enquiry" at Level II service would be about \$3.90 per enquiry.

In the case of a carrell the number of visitors seeking information cannot be predicted, but if only one enquirer per day used the larger one and one every other day used the smaller one, the cost per "enquiry" would be \$2.83 or \$2.31 respectively. The level of service would be somewhat less than that provided by the normal in-person Level II service.

Other costs per enquiry are shown in Table IV which shows module enquiries varying from just over \$2.00 to approximately \$40 per enquiry.

Table IV

Direct Costs of Enquiry System Modules per Enquiry

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Staff per Community Type</u>	<u>Annual Cost of Centre</u>	<u>Population Covered (Group Aver.)</u>	<u>Enquiries per Year (x .017)</u>	<u>Cost per Enquiry</u>
Major Metro	13	\$294,000	2.3 million	39,100	\$ 7.50
Metro (500k - 1,000k)	5	123,300	381,000	6,480	19.00
City (100k - 500k)	4	93,400	188,000	3,200	29.20
City (30k - 100k)	2	45,300	52,000 f_1	1,140	39.80
Communities (10k - 30k)	Itinerant Info. Off.	19,200	3x(20,000) f_2	5,000	3.80
Carrell (10k - 30k)		1,000	8,600 f_3	350	2.80
(less than 10k)		300	2,600 f_4	130	2.30

f_1 : use 0.022 enquiries per 1000 population, based on 30% more walk-ins in a smaller community

f_2 : use 0.082 enquiries per 1000 population, based on 10 interviews a day for 5 days a week for 49 weeks.

f_3 : use 0.041 enquiries per 1000 population based on 1 enquiry per day.

f_4 : use 0.050 enquiries per 1000 population based on 1 enquiry every other day.

6. COSTS AND BENEFITS OF A TOTAL PROGRAM

A total Enquiry System program which has national coverage and uses a variety of system modules as in Option A would cost an estimated \$7.50 to \$8 million per year (see Appendix C, Table B). Services is provided by this system to 81% of the population at a cost of about \$0.40 per person covered. Approximately three hundred people will be required to operate the system including a central administrative and co-ordinating staff of about fifty persons.

Benefits from the system arise from a number of sources -- value of federal presence, improved service to the public, reduced load of departmental staff -- some of which are measurable and some are not readily so. In the case of reduced phone calls to departments, both well-directed and mis-directed, the savings can be estimated. A rough, but conservative estimate of the savings from these reduced phone calls has been made at \$1.6 million (see Appendix C, Table D).

The four other Options (B, C, D and E) that were developed show considerably reduced operating costs per unit, although some have features that make them difficult to set up and administer.

All five Options are included in the recommended Pilot Program in some degree, for testing and evaluation purposes.

7.0 THE PILOT PROGRAM

Prior to engaging in the implementation of any of the Options or parts of Options described in this report it is recommended that a Pilot Program be initiated to test optimum mixes of the proposed system modules.

The recommended pilot program covers a four to six month preliminary period for organizing the various enquiry centres and systems and a one year period for operations and testing. The total cost of the pilot program is estimated to be approximately \$2.3 million spread over eighteen months. The pilot program, some element of which would operate in each Province, would involve operating and testing:

- 12 federally sponsored Walk-In Centres;
- 8 federally sponsored Itinerant Services;
- 40 federally sponsored Community Carrells;
- 50 federally sponsored Village Carrells;
- 9 federally sponsored Departmental Public Enquiry Services;
- 3 Federal - Provincial Walk-In Centres;
- 3 Community Sponsored Walk-In Centres;
- 2 Feed-back/Accountability oriented centres; and,
- 2 cases where existing enquiry centres are monitored.

The initial period of the pilot program, in addition to covering the organizational phase, would include a substantial effort in designing the research and evaluation methodology (including the monitoring and data collection systems and instruments). During the implementation phase (of one year's duration) the design, operations and support of each of the various centres along with their efficiency and effectiveness in dealing with the public would be continually monitored and progressively evaluated.

The components of the Pilot Program would be as follows:

7.1 RESEARCH PROGRAM

The first step in the research program is to set up the experimental design. Once the overall design has been established then the following steps in the program would be taken and integrated into the research program according to the design.

- Enquiry system modules would be redesigned to bring them up to a maximum level of effectiveness in the light of costs and expected benefits.
- Test programs would be developed for specific areas of the country to expose the developed modules to field conditions in enough variety to provide valid test and evaluation opportunities.
- An assessment methodology and model would be developed to permit the assessment of alternate test programs in a test area before implementation.
- Final test programs would be developed for implementation in the pilot program in selected test areas.
- An evaluation program would be developed while the preceding program is being carried out to prepare for application to the Pilot Program immediately it is implemented.

An integral element of the evaluation of the various modules and system options would be a rigorous benefit cost analysis. The evaluation would conform to the federal Treasury Board Guidelines on benefit cost analysis and the evaluation standards evolving from the Office of the Comptroller General.

7.2 THE TEST PROGRAM

In order to grasp the scope of the Pilot Program an estimate has been made of how many of the Enquiry System modules will likely be required. This does not take account of the location of the regional mix of modules or test systems, but for costing purposes it will give an idea of how large the test program will probably be. The estimated number and cost of the modules is given in Table II. The total cost shown is \$1,776,100 but this does not include the central control and administrative group, the cost of materials or the design and evaluation costs. This will be shown later.

7.3 PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

While the research program is being developed an implementation team will be assembled and organized which will be preparing for the implementation. Its job will be to recruit and train staff to be ready to take on the enquiry centre modules, and prepare the multitude of reference resource materials that will be required. As the program unfolds the implementation team will be the administering body. It will be required as the program moves on to look after the finances, staff deployment and ensure that adequate records are kept so that evaluations can later be made.

7.4 TIMING

The timing proposed will of necessity be tight, but will serve to maintain a useful sense of urgency and momentum.

The research program will be completed in the first three months after authority is given to begin. The Implementation Team will need to start before the end of the three months in order to gain time for recruiting, training and preparation of materials.

The implementation of the Pilot Program would then be ready to begin as soon as the research program is completed. Once the implementation begins the evaluation team will be required to take some time to ensure that the data is collected in accordance with the evaluation procedures to follow. This will be a monitoring and consulting role. In addition to the monitoring, two periods of evaluation and analysis are proposed. One at the end of six months of operation of the Pilot Program, and the other at the end of the proposed year for the experiment.

A final report will be prepared at the end of the test year which will include the redesign of the Enquiry System according to the findings of the completed evaluation, and final recommendations.

If the authorization to proceed is given by July 1st, 1980 then the program timing will be as shown below:

- by Sept. 1, 1980
 - implementation team established and recruiting, training and assembly of resource information material begun
 - some Enquiry Centre modules and test programs established, ready to go.
- by Oct. 1, 1980
 - research program completed and recommendations made
 - full implementation begun, and data gathering started.
- by March 1, 1981
 - first six months of operations completed, data gathered and evaluation begun.
- by Sept. 1, 1981
 - first year of Pilot Program completed final evaluation begun.
- by Nov. 1, 1981
 - evaluation complete, redesign of Enquiry Systems finished, recommendations made, final report filed.

Total Costs of the Pilot Program for Enquiry Centres

Total costs of the Pilot Program are summarized in Table V. A detailed breakdown of the costs is included in the Appendices. Some benefits will accrue to the government during the field tests due to federal presence, literature handed out, citizens' problems resolved and reduced costs to the government departments from enquiries handled by the units of the test program. These benefits are not included in the costs shown in Table V.

APPENDIX "C"

The proposal to provide Canada-wide citizen access to the nearest office of frequently used government services has been developed on the principle that no Canadian should be penalized by his chosen place of habitation in dealing with his government. It acknowledges regional differences and overcomes them. It equalizes the opportunity to deal with government for all, from those well educated to those without similar capabilities.

Without the benefit of precedents, cost estimates can only be provided in ranges and cannot take into account countervailing savings that would result from toll-free telephone access. For example, preparation of a letter is estimated to cost \$6 - \$12 and it is expected that the number of formal responses to citizen's inquiries would drop dramatically with the provision of this telephone service. These statistics cannot reflect costs already being incurred through the provision of existing Zenith and other forms of toll-free service for certain federal activities. Business Information Centres, Revenue Canada, R.C.M.P. and several other agencies now provide toll-free service either nationally or in some regions and this would mean these costs are not entirely new costs.

The anticipated cost, in long distance and related charges, for providing the basic services to the nearest office location would be \$2 million annually based on one call per 1,000 telephones in Canada. It could be as high as \$8 million if there were one call per 250 telephones however, statistics from existing provincial services indicate that the expected volume will be closer to the one to one thousand range. These statistics were extrapolated from data developed for Ontario where the provincial government has just begun the provision of toll-free access across the province.

The time per call is approximately 2 minutes based on national experience for competent information services.

Without a toll-free service being in place, the data provided is developed on cost ranges rather than on historical data and experience. Ontario has just introduced a province-wide service and the national projections are developed from an extrapolation of Ontario data.

The projections developed here are based on the following basic assumptions:

1. The majority of public inquiries concerning federal government programs are best handled locally or regionally rather than in one central location;
2. A centralized system would be at least twice as expensive as a system that took advantage of local knowledge that exists in regional government offices;
3. Enquiry systems that put the citizen in direct contact with the appropriate government department provide the best "Service to the Public";
4. Provision of toll-free access would require increased capability to deal with the anticipated increase in interest in federal programs and policies;
5. Concise, easily-read and understood telephone directory listings are a prerequisite to a toll-free telephone system;

6. A combination of improved telephone directory listings and a general enquiry number at the end of the listings would produce a manageable program.
7. Lowest-cost regional calling would be facilitated by boundaries that:
 - conform with directory coverage areas,
 - conform, where possible, to existing or future, lowest-cost long distance programs (Wide Area Telephone Service, Zenith, Remote Call Forwarding).

The attached projected telephone calling volumes and associated costs are detailed in items A through G and summarized in items 1 and 2. Projections have been included to provide:

- Canada-wide toll-free access to selected Government of Canada services and programs;
- equipment, both local and long distance, to accommodate this service and the associated increased operators.

By projecting costs for the Province of Ontario, based on total population and the numbers of telephone subscribers who have toll or toll-free calling to the major centres, a cost projection and comparison can be made for each province.

- a) Total telephone subscribers throughout Ontario with toll/toll-free calling to major centres:

CITY	TOTAL TELEPHONE SUBSCRIBERS	SUBSCRIBERS WITH TOLL CHARGE
Toronto	1,604,508	289,926
London	453,010	328,930
Hamilton	449,000	209,273
Ottawa	413,804	192,826
Windsor	210,044	105,985
Sudbury	156,024	95,682
Peterborough	140,289	102,088
Thunder Bay	86,529	40,090
Sault Ste. Marie	50,081	16,839
	<u>3,563,289</u>	<u>1,381,838</u>

Subscribers (with a toll charge would be lower in the West and the Maritimes per capita, the same for Quebec and B.C. and probably somewhat higher in Newfoundland).

- b) Projected long distance calling and associated charges for the Government of Canada, for Canada-wide coverage, based on one telephone call per month per 1000 telephones.

Province	Population	Calls Yearly	4 Min.	3 Min.	2 Min.	1 Min.	30 Sec.
B.C.	2611700	101817	161663	130933	94597	52608	34622
Alta.	2053100	80040	127086	102928	74364	41356	27217
Sask.	965300	37632	59751	48393	34963	19444	12796
Man.	1026200	40006	63521	51446	37169	20671	13604
Ont.	8543300	333062	528828	428304	309444	172092	113256
Que.	6288300	245150	389243	315253	227765	126668	83362
N.S.	851000	33176	52676	42663	30823	17142	11281
N.B.	704800	27477	43626	35333	25528	14197	9343
P.E.I.	123900	4830	7669	6211	4487	2495	1642
Nfld.	577400	22509	35740	28946	20913	11630	7654
* 23,745,000		925,699	\$1,469,808	\$1,190,415	\$860,058	\$478,307	\$314,780

* Yukon and N.W.T. excluded

- c) Projected long distance calling and associated charges for the Government of Canada, for Canada-wide coverage, based on one telephone call per month per 250 telephones.

Province	Population	Calls Yearly	4 Min.	3 Min.	2 Min.	1 Min.	30 Sec.
B.C.	2611700	407268	646652	523732	378388	210432	138498
Alta.	2053100	320160	508344	411712	297456	165424	108868
Sask.	965300	150528	239004	193572	139852	77776	51184
Man.	1026200	160024	254084	205784	148676	82684	54416
Ont.	8543300	1332248	2115312	1713216	1237776	688368	453024
Que.	6288300	980600	1556972	1261012	911060	506672	333448
N.S.	851000	132704	210704	170652	123292	68568	45124
N.B.	704800	109908	174504	141332	102112	56788	37372
P.E.I.	123900	19320	30676	24844	17948	9980	6568
Nfld.	577400	90036	142960	115784	83652	46520	30616
* 23,745,000		3,702,796	\$5,879,232	\$4,761,660	\$3,440,232	\$1,913,228	\$1,259,120

* Yukon and N.W.T. excluded

- d) Projected local calls and associated charges for the Government of Canada for Canada-wide coverage, based on one telephone call per month per 1000 telephones.

<u>Province</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Calls Yearly</u>	<u>4 Min.</u>	<u>3 Min.</u>	<u>2 Min.</u>	<u>1 Min.</u>	<u>30 Sec.</u>
B.C.	2611700	63350	59540	48283	34141	28642	23015
Alta.	2053100	49808	46806	37956	26839	22516	18092
Sask.	965300	23418	22007	17845	12619	10586	8506
Man.	1026200	24895	23395	18971	13415	11254	9043
Ont.	8543300	207260	194772	157944	111684	93696	75288
Que.	6288300	152553	143361	118140	82205	68964	55415
N.S.	851000	20645	19401	15732	11124	9333	7499
N.B.	705800	17098	16068	13029	9213	7729	6211
P.E.I.	123900	3005	2824	2290	1619	1358	1091
Nfld.	577400	14007	13163	10674	7548	6332	5088
	23,745,000	576,051	\$541,343	\$438,983	\$310,411	\$260,413	\$209,252

- e) Projected local calls and associated charges for the Government of Canada for Canada-wide coverage, based on one telephone call per month for month from 250 telephones.

<u>Province</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Calls Yearly</u>					
B.C.	2611700	253436	238168	193132	136564	114568	92060
Alta.	2053100	119232	187224	151824	107356	90064	72368
Sask.	965300	93672	88028	71380	50476	42344	34024
Man.	1026200	99580	93580	76884	53660	45016	36172
Ont.	8543300	829040	779088	631776	446736	374784	301152
Que.	6288300	610212	573444	472560	328820	275856	221660
N.S.	851000	82580	77604	62928	44496	37332	29996
N.B.	704800	68392	64272	52116	36852	30916	24844
P.E.I.	123900	12020	11296	9160	6476	5432	4364
Nfld.	577400	56028	52652	42696	30192	25328	20352
	23,745,000	2,304,204	\$2,165,372	\$1,755,932	\$1,241,644	\$1,041,652	\$837,008

e) Summary

1. Call volumes and projected costs based on one call per month from 1000 telephones.

<u>Time</u>	<u>4 Min.</u>	<u>3 Min.</u>	<u>2 Min.</u>	<u>1 Min.</u>	<u>30 Sec.</u>
<u>Type</u>					
Long Dist.	\$1,469,808	\$1,119,415	\$ 860,058	\$478,307	\$314,780
Local	<u>\$ 541,343</u>	<u>\$ 438,983</u>	<u>\$ 310,411</u>	<u>\$260,413</u>	<u>\$209,252</u>
TOTAL	\$2,011,151	\$1,629,398	\$1,170,469	\$738,720	\$524,032

Calls per year

Long Dist.	925,699
Local	<u>576,051</u>
TOTAL	1,501,750

2. Call volumes and projected costs based on one call per month from 250 telephones.

<u>Time</u>	<u>4 Min.</u>	<u>3 Min.</u>	<u>2 Min.</u>	<u>1 Min.</u>	<u>30 Sec.</u>
<u>Type</u>					
Long Dist.	\$5,879,232	\$4,761,660	\$3,440,232	\$1,913,028	\$1,259,242
Local	<u>\$2,165,372</u>	<u>\$1,755,932</u>	<u>\$1,241,644</u>	<u>\$1,041,652</u>	<u>\$ 837,000</u>
TOTAL	\$8,044,604	\$6,517,592	\$4,681,876	\$2,954,680	\$2,096,292

Calls per year

Long Dist.	3,702,796
Local	<u>2,304,204</u>
TOTAL	6,007,000

3. Estimate of costs: \$2.0 million 1980/81.

